

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BUENOS 07234 031907Z

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UN, KS, AR

SUBJECT: ARGENTINE POSITION ON KOREAN ISSUE AT UN: REVIEW OF BIDDING
AND REQUEST FOR FURTHER GUIDANCE

REFS: A) BA-7130, B) STATE 245459, C) BA-7148, D) STATE 131759,
E) BA-6903

1. ARGENTINA'S ORIGINAL POSITION WAS THAT SHE WOULD ABSTAIN ON ALL THREE QUESTIONS REGARDING KOREAN IN THE FIRST COMMITTEE. THIS REFLECTED A MIX OF PRAGMATISM AND PRINCIPLE, WITH MORE OF THE FORMER THAN THE LATTER. ARGENTINA MAY SINCERELY HAVE BELIEVED THAT NEITHER RESOLUTION WAS ADEQUATE AND THAT A THIRD SHOULD BE SOUGHT, BUT SHE ALSO HAD COMPELLING PRACTICAL REASONS FOR ABSTAINING: (A) SHE HAS RELATIONS WITH BOTH KOREAS AND WISHED TO OFFEND NEITHER; (B) SHE DID NOT WISH TO LOSE THIRD WORLD SUPPORT BY VOTING WITH US AND AGAINST NORTH KOREA; AND, PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANTLY, (C) HER AMBASSADOR IN THE UN HAS IDEAS OF BECOMING SECGEN AND WISHES TO DO NOTHING TO OFFEND THE NONALIGNED BLOC. HENCE, ARGENTINA MADE UP HER MIND EARLY THAT SHE WOULD ABSTAIN ON THE TWO RESOLUTIONS. REPRESENTATIONS ON OUR PART HERE, IN THE UN, AND IN WASHINGTON COULD NOT SHAKE THEM FROM THAT POSITION. NEITHER COULD THE REPRESENTATIONS OF THE SOUTH KOREANS, THE JAPANESE, THE FRENCH AND OTHERS.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 BUENOS 07234 031907Z

2. ARGENTINA DOES, HOWEVER, VALUE GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE US. THUS, WHEN OUR CONTINUED DEMARCHES FINALLY CONVINCED THE FOREIGN MINISTRY THAT WE PLACED EXTREME IMPORTANCE ON THIS ISSUE, THEY BEGAN TO SEARCH FOR SOME MEANS OF ACCOMMODATING US-- WITHOUT GIVING AWAY THEIR OWN POSITION. WHAT THEY CAME UP WITH AT THE LAST MINUTE WAS THE IDEA OF VOTING WITH US ON THE PRIORITY ISSUE, THUS, IN THEIR MINDS, HELPING TO ASSURE THAT THE FRIENDLY RESOLUTION WAS TAKEN UP FIRST IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY--WHICH THEY BELIEVED WOULD ASSURE ITS PASSAGE AND KILL THE UNFRIENDLY RESOLUTION. THEY WERE UNDER NO MISCONCEPTIONS CONCERNING OUR DESIRE TO DEFEAT THE UNFRIENDLY RESOLUTION IN COMMITTEE. AMB HILL, IN HIS DEMARCHE ON OCT 28 SUGGESTING THAT WE MIGHT HAVE TO REVIEW OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS IF THEY DID NOT VOTE WITH US (SEE REF A), REFERRED SPECIFICALLY TO THE VOTE THE FOLLOWING DAY--I.E. IN FIRST COMMITTEE. WE ARE CERTAIN REPRESENTATIONS IN THE UN AND WASHINGTON WERE EQUALLY CLEAR. BUT WHILE THEY UNDERSTOOD THAT WE WOULD HAVE PREFERRED TO KILL IT IN COMMITTEE, THE ARGENTINES APPARENTLY LOOKED AT THE PROBLEM AS A WHOLE, RATHER THAN SIMPLY IN THE FIRST COMMITTEE. FROM SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATIONS WITH WORKING LEVEL OFFICIALS, IT IS CLEAR THAT THEY ASSUMED THAT NOTWITHSTANDING OUR EFFORT TO DEFEAT THE UNFRIENDLY RESOLUTION IN COMMITTEE, OUR OVERRIDING PURPOSE WAS TO MAKE CERTAIN IT WAS NOT ACCEPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. AND THIS THEY BELIEVED COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED BY VOTING TO TAKE UP THE FRIENDLY RESOLUTION FIRST, EVEN IF BOTH RESOLUTIONS WERE SENT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. OTHERWISE, AS ONE WORKING LEVEL OFFICIAL COMMENTED, "WHY DID YOU ATTACH ANY IMPORTANCE TO THE PRIORITY ISSUE IN YOUR AIDE-MEMOIRE TO US?" (SEE REF B).

3. FROM THE INTIMATIONS OF WORKING LEVEL OFFICERS, WE WERE AWARE OF THIS VIEW (SEE REF C), THOUGH FONMIN ARAUZ CASTEX NEVER ARTICULATED IT. EVEN IF HE HAD, WE WOULD HAVE HAD NO STRONG ARGUMENTS TO USE AGAINST IT, FOR ALL OUR INSTRUCTIONS FOCUSED ON VOTING IN THE FIRST COMMITTEE. NONE REALLY ELABORATED ON WHAT WOULD HAPPEN AND WHAT OUR TACTICS MIGHT BE IF BOTH RESOLUTIONS PASSED. IN INFORMAL CONVERSATIONS WITH WORKING LEVEL OFFICIALS WE FELL BACK ON PARA TEN OF REF D, I.E. THAT AN UNACCEPTABLE COMPROMISE RESOLUTION WOULD PROBABLY BE THE OUTCOME IN PLENARY IF BOTH PRESENT RESOLUTIONS PASSED IN FIRST

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 BUENOS 07234 031907Z

COMMITTEE. THIS WAS NOT AN EFFECTIVE ARGUMENT, HOWEVER, FOR THE ARGENTINES SIMPLY ASKED, "WHY?", AND WENT BACK TO THEIR ASSUMPTION THAT WE HAD ENOUGH VOTES TO PASS OUR RESOLUTION IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. FURTHER, THE ARGENTINES HAVE ALL ALONG FAVORED A THIRD RESOLUTIONS; HENCE, THIS WAS WORSE THAN NO ARGUMENT AT ALL.

4. THE ARGENTINES MAY WELL HAVE BEEN TOTALLY WRONG IN

THEIR APPROACH, BUT HERE AT LEAST (WE CANNOT SPEAK FOR ORTIZ DE ROZAS' VIEW) THEY BELIEVED AND STILL BELIEVE, THAT THEY WERE HELPFUL TO US BY VOTING AGAINST REVERSING THE PRIORITIES. THIS MAY NOT BE THE CASE, BUT IN ANY EVENT WE WOULD MUCH APPRECIATE SOME INDICATION FROM THE DEPT OR USUN AS TO WHAT WE DO NOW. DO WE INTEND TO LOBBY FOR THE FRIENDLY RESOLUTION IN THE GA, DO WE GO TO A COMPROMISE RESOLUTION IN PLENARY (AND IF SO, WHY?), OR IS THERE SOME THIRD COURSE?

5. IF WE ARE GOING TO TRY TO GET THE FRIENDLY RESOLUTION THROUGH THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, WE ASSUME WE WILL NEED ALL THE VOTES WE CAN GET, INCLUDING THAT OF ARGENTINA. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT WITH A BIT OF HORSE TRADING WE JUST MIGHT SWING THE ARGENTINES OVER TO VOTING WITH US. MOST VITAL ISSUE FOR ARGENTINA, AS FONMIN ARAUZ CASTEX HAS INDICATED (SEE REF E), IS THAT OF MALVINAS. ARGENTINES UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR US TO SUPPORT THEIR CLAIMS AGAINST THOSE OF THE UK. IF, HOWEVER, WE COULD SEE OUR WAY CLEAR TO PRIVATELY AND DISCREETLY URGE BRITISH TO CARRY ON WITH NEGOTIATIONS, THUS REMOVING IRRITATION BETWEEN TWO CLOSE FRIENDS, THIS MIGHT WELL BE ENOUGH TO CAUSE ARGENTINES, IN RETURN, TO VOTE WITH US ON KOREAN ISSUE. AND SUCH DEMARCHE ON OUR PART TO BRITISH WOULD COST US LITTLE. THERE IS UN RESOLUTION CALLING FOR TWO SIDES TO NEGOTIATE. WE WOULD NOT BE SHOWING PREFERENCE FOR EITHER SIDE. WE WOULD SIMPLY BE GIVING VERBAL SUPPORT TO A UN RESOLUTION AND URGING TWO FRIENDS TO SETTLE THEIR PROBLEM THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS.

6. CERTAINLY EMBASSY WOULD RECOMMEND STRONGLY AGAINST ANY "REVIEW OF BILATERAL RELATIONS" AT THIS TIME. ARGENTINA BELIEVES SHE RESPONDED TO OUR DEMARCHE, AT LEAST IN PART, AND WOULD NOT UNDERSTAND SUCH A REVIEW. FURTHER, WE MAY NEED THE ARGENTINE VOTE ON OTHER KEY ISSUES IN THE GA--POSSIBLY EVEN ON THE KOREAN ISSUE ITSELF. WE WILL NOT
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 BUENOS 07234 031907Z

GET IT BY REVIEWING RELATIONS. AND FINALLY, WE HAVE OTHER IMPORTANT INTERESTS HERE--IN TERMS OF OUR INVESTMENTS, OUR POLITICAL STRATEGY IN THE HEMISPHERE AND IN THE SOUTHERN CONE--WHICH COULD BE SERIOUSLY DAMAGED BY SUCH A STEP. WE DO NOT RULE IT OUT FOR THE FUTURE, BUT AT THIS POINT IT WOULD APPEAR TO BE PREMATURE AND COUNTERPRODUCTIVE.
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